

Pioneer

CASE STUDY

FABRIC ROOM TWO

LONDON

Seminal London nightclub, fabric, chooses
Pioneer Pro Audio as its new audio partner



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It takes a special nightclub to make a significant impact on a musical genre over a sustained period of time, and that's exactly what London's fabric has done. Since opening its doors in 1999, the team behind the club has worked tirelessly to promote, and in turn help to develop, boundarypushing dance music. Never compromising on their strictly underground policy, they've made fabric more than somewhere to dance. In fact, the club is so highly respected that people travel across the globe to hear the world's most innovative DJs and artists play on its famous sound systems.



“Premier music, premier sound and premier light is our ethos. There are few sound systems around the world that are always commented on. Fabric’s has always been one of them.”

Andrew Blackett | Promotions Manager | fabric

INSTALLATION AT A GLANCE	
PA	AMPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• XY-152 15-inch two-way loudspeaker x 4• XY-122 12-inch two-way loudspeaker x 12• XY-218S 18-inch twin bass reflex subwoofer x 10• GS WAV-TWPOD x 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Powersoft K10 DSP x 5• Powersoft K3 DSP x 1• Powersoft K2 DSP x 3• Powersoft M20DH DSP x 1
DJ BOOTH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• XY-122 12-inch two-way loudspeaker x 4• XY-118S 18-inch bass reflex subwoofer x 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Powersoft K10 DSP x 1• Powersoft K3 DSP x 1• Powersoft K2 DSP x 1
LIVE STAGE SET-UP ROOM 1	LIVE STAGE SET-UP ROOM 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• XY-122 12-inch two-way loudspeaker x 2• XY-215S dual 15-inch quasi-bandpass subwoofer x 2• Powersoft K10 DSP x 1• Powersoft K3 DSP x 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• XY-122 12-inch two-way loudspeaker x 2• XY-118S 18-inch bass reflex subwoofer x 2• Powersoft K3 DSP x 1• Powersoft K2 DSP x 1

THE CHALLENGE

THE HIGHEST AUDIO EXPECTATIONS

“
My biggest concern was the time; were we going to be able
to do it in the time we had? The club didn’t want to close.
”

Keith Reynolds | Technical Manager | fabric

Unsurprisingly the decision to replace the sound system in fabric’s Room Two wasn’t taken lightly. But, having been in use for 14 years, it had become tired and needed an overhaul, says Keith Reynolds, Technical Manager at the club. “Even though it was a full-range system, there were limitations in getting a full-range sound out of it. We were starting to get to the point of losing a lot of sound quality.”

The fabric team were clear about what they wanted from a new install. “We were looking for that dance music sound, which is lots of sub-bass, lots of kick drum and then a good full range after that,” explains Reynolds, adding: “I didn’t want a line array system. I still wanted a point-source club sound system, where you’ve got a lot of sound pressure from all around.”

The brief may sound simple, but the unusual shape of Room Two and the construction of the building present a number of audio challenges that can change as often as every half an hour when the club is open. Housed in a Victorian cold store, fabric’s brick structure and railway arch ceilings create reflections that are difficult to control, while the number of people in the room, the temperature inside and even the weather outside can all affect the performance of the sound system, too. Even the self-contained DJ booth had its issues. “I call it the Bass Cave because we’ve got brick walls around it. We always had trouble with sound reverberation around there,” says Andrew Blackett, fabric’s Promotions Manager.





THE SOLUTION

FIVE DAYS, TWO TEAMS, ONE OUTSTANDING SYSTEM

Blackett had stayed in touch with Pioneer Pro Audio's Manager, Alex Barrand, since the pair worked together at another famous London nightclub, Ministry of Sound, over a decade ago and invited him to demo a system in fabric's Room Two. Barrand chose the XY Series for its versatility and relatively small cabinet sizes, which allowed his team to position speakers anywhere necessary to ensure even coverage in the awkwardly shaped room. And, although there were just two hours to get a system in place and tune it, the relatively flat voices of the XY speakers meant that "we weren't adding more processing to what was already there," explains Barrand. "We were subtracting processing and EQ points based on the measurements of the room. So we were able to get a really good sound pretty quickly."

The team at the club was impressed. "We listened to a handful of systems and gave them two demos each, and Pioneer won every single demo hands down. It blew your socks off and none of the other systems had that initial impact," remembers Blackett, while fabric's Founding Partner, Cameron Leslie, adds: "It purely came down to the sound that was right in this environment, and that was our choice. It was the right system for this venue."

At that point, Pioneer Pro Audio was selected as the club's new audio partner but, despite this monumental achievement, the hard work was just beginning. Barrand and his team had just five days to install and tune the entire new system, which needed to achieve even coverage in the tricky space and avoid the troublesome reflections caused by the building's construction.

The system comprises 26 speakers from the XY Series, including 10 XY-218S twin 18-inch subwoofers and 12 XY-122 12-inch full-range speakers. "Putting the XY series in there and having clusters around the dancefloor created total coverage. You also hear a lot more definition and detail because, instead of four compression drivers that were previously in the room,

there are twelve now," explains Pioneer Pro Audio's Barrand, adding, "We installed clusters of two XY-152s left and right of the stage. We rotated the horn to get this amazing 120-degree dispersion and a 60-degree vertical dispersion, which gives great coverage at the front where the crowd are leaning up against the stage."

Powersoft amplifiers with AES digital connections drive the entire system, including five K10 DSP amps, three K2 DSP amps and one K3 DSP amp for the speakers around the dancefloor, and they've been hugely popular with the club's team. "They've been amazing. I absolutely love them," enthuses Reynolds, who can now use Armonia software to tune the system from a laptop and adapt to the conditions in the club at any time. "The amps are all intelligent. You tell the amplifier which speaker it's speaking to and it'll set itself up for that. Then you can fine-tune it from there. It's very flexible," he adds. With the clock ticking from Monday morning until the club opened on the Friday night, how did the tight time frame work out? "I was scared about that," admits Reynolds. "But the guys from Pioneer came in and did it in three days. We were ready by Wednesday and we spent Thursday just tuning and smiling. It was some feat."



“
You could see everybody looking at each other and just nodding as if to say, ‘Yes, that’s perfect’.
”

Cameron Leslie | Founding Partner | fabric



THE RESULT

A SYSTEM SPARKING A PARTNERSHIP



Keith Reilly (left) and Cameron Leslie (right) | Founding Partners | fabric Keith Reynolds | Technical Manager | fabric

If the team at the club were impressed by the XY Series demo, it's safe to say they were bowled over by the finished system. "You get goosebumps. It just hits the right note," says Leslie. And, according to Blackett, the point source system ticks all the boxes in terms of delivering full dynamic range and even coverage in the awkward space. "Everything points in on you, whereas the old system fired at you. The power beats the awkward shape of the room, but it has the warmth in the bass and the mid-range to still fill the room," he explains, adding that even the issue of unwanted reverberation in the Bass Cave DJ booth has been solved. "With Alex and the Pioneer team installing the new monitor system in the booth, they've beaten that and made it sound good in there."

But it's not just the fabric team who've raved about the new system. After performing at the club for the first time

since the install, international DJ Jackmaster said: "I always really liked the system in Room Two, but to my surprise they've made it even better. I really noticed the difference in there. The energy seemed to really step up a notch." And legendary electro artist Egyptian Lover commented that, "It's the best sound system I've played on since 1984."

Now that the new system is in place and delivering the fullrange sound that Room Two needs, it's just the beginning for the relationship between the club and Pioneer Pro Audio, who has been named official audio partner for Room Two. And as fabric's Leslie explains, it's a partnership to be excited about: "Pushing the boundaries a little bit would be where I'd love to see fabric going, both in terms of line-ups and in terms of the infrastructure and systems that they're presented on. Advancing the technologies that Pioneer has at its disposal – that's the future for us."

“

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”

Jackmaster | International DJ

About AlphaTheta Corporation (former company name: Pioneer DJ Corporation)

AlphaTheta EMEA Limited is the subsidiary of AlphaTheta Corporation responsible for sales and marketing in EMEA. For more than 20 years, the Pioneer DJ brand has been a market leader in the design and production of innovative DJ equipment and software. The company works closely with DJs and clubs to deliver next generation products that inspire and shape the global dance music community and has recently launched a new range of musical instruments for production and live performances. Its portfolio includes brands such as TORAIZ, Pioneer Pro Audio and Pioneer DJ Radio as well as social platforms KUVVO and DJsounds. AlphaTheta Corporation is a privately held company headquartered in Yokohama, Japan, and is led by President and CEO Yoshinori Kataoka.

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